



# FEMA

## *Drainage Pump System Protects Assumption Parish Residents*

Napoleonville, LA – Located 60 miles west of New Orleans, the Assumption Parish is nestled along Bayou Lafourche just south of the Mississippi River. Its southernmost tip sits about 25 miles from the Gulf of Mexico. Miles upon miles of lakes and bayous meander through the parish. It's most vulnerable areas include Bayou L'Ourse and the low-lying areas of Pierre Part, which has the largest portion of the parish's 23,000 inhabitants.

Starting in the 1970s, parish authorities had drainage pumps installed to deal with Mississippi River flooding and deluges from heavy rains, tropical storms, and hurricanes. Today, Assumption Parish has 66 strategically located pumping stations standing ready when storms strike.

The network of pumps sucks up flood water and diverts it to Lake Verret, a seven-mile-long swamp that lies at the western edge of the parish. Along the way, the water rushes through pipes ranging in diameter from 8 inches to 32 inches.

The earliest pumps used diesel fuel, but electricity powers most of their replacements. The electric-powered systems start up automatically, while the gas and propane generators must be fired up manually when rains begin to pool into significant amounts of water. All of the pumps have automatic shutoff systems, and many of the pump stations have backup generators.

A 12-inch pump station with 8-foot long pipes costs about \$25,000 to purchase and install, with larger stations costing far more. Maintenance requires ongoing attention, with pump motors usually lasting 10 years, and the pumps themselves lasting about 20 years.

Elevated above the highest flood marks, the pumps ensured the parish had "minimal damage" during hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the 2011 Mississippi River floods.

Even so, Hurricane Isaac's prolonged torrential rains posed a unique challenge. "It rained and rained, and the pumps ran and ran," said Bobby Naquin, parish manager. The pumps again saved the day. "The results again were very little flooding compared to some areas due the efficiency of the pumps."



**Assumption Parish,  
Louisiana**



### **Quick Facts**

Sector:

**Public**

Cost:

**Amount Not Available**

Primary Activity/Project:

**Flood Control**

Primary Funding:

**State sources**